

- **Frequently Asked Questions**

Is my limousine a bus?

If the vehicle, regardless of body style, is designed or used to transport more than 15 passengers (including the driver) it is a bus.

How is design determined?

Federal Motor Vehicle Standards define seating capacity as:

- any location capable of accommodating a person at least as large as a 5th percentile adult female, if the overall seat configuration and
- design and vehicle design is such that the position is likely to be used as a seating position while the vehicle is in motion.
- The designated seating capacity weight allowance must not exceed the GVWR rating of the vehicle.

This measurement generally is between 12.3" and 16.4" per designated seat.

Manufacturers generally determine the maximum seating capacity of a bus.

My company wishes to go across state lines or US borders, what do I need to do this?

You must have both a federal USDOT Number, and a federal Interstate Operating Authority (MC number). This can be completed by filing on-line at: www.usdotnumberregistration.com and/or <http://diy.dot.gov/>. After securing the MC number, you must also designate an agent to legally represent you in every state that you wish to operate in/thru. You can find BOC-3 agents through a search of the web or through industry associations.

When filling out applications, your operation would be described as interstate, authorized for-hire common carrier, then follow the instructions provided on the website.

Carriers operating diesel powered equipment with 3 axles or more must have **IFTA** fuel tax decals displayed on the vehicle. These decals can be obtained by calling (517) 373-3183.

Carriers may elect to join the Single State Registration System (**SSRS**) for payment of registration fees to other states that they will be operating in or thru. Information can be requested in Ohio (614) 466-3392 or Indiana (317) 615-7289. Only Michigan truck carriers can use Michigan's SSRS Program.

SSRS is a program in which for-hire carriers of passengers or property are required to register

their Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) operating authority and proof of insurance with their base state. The base state is determined by the location of the carrier's principal place of business. If a carrier's principal place of business is maintained outside of a participating state, the carrier must select the state where the largest number of vehicles will be operated during the next registration year. All fees required for states into which the carrier operates are paid to the base state, which then transmits the fees to the other states. The registration period runs from January 1 through December 31. Carriers located in states not participating in the program and those carriers from Canadian provinces are required to register with the participating state where the greatest number of vehicles will operate in the upcoming year. The base state will issue all registrants a receipt indicating the states in which the carrier may operate. The carrier is then required to make a copy for each vehicle for which fees have been paid (this receipt must be carried in the vehicle). Carriers that operate in a state for which fees haven't been paid are subject to law enforcement action.

Operations into Canada must be conducted using Canada's rules and regulations. Information can be obtained from the province's which you intend to operate in. (i.e. Ontario Ministry of Transport at 416-326-6732).

What is a Apportioned Plate and IRP and what do they stand for?

The International Registration Plan (**IRP**) is a program for licensing commercial vehicles (trucks and **non-chartered buses**, i.e. Regular Route) in interstate operations. Under this program, an interstate carrier files an apportioned registration application in the state or province where the carrier is based (the base jurisdiction). The fleet vehicles and the miles traveled in each state are listed on the application. The base jurisdiction collects the full license registration fee. They distribute the fees to the other jurisdictions based on the percentage of miles the carrier will travel, or has traveled in each jurisdiction. The base jurisdiction also issues **a license plate showing the word "apportioned"** and a cab card showing the jurisdictions and weights for which the carrier has paid fees. **Buses used exclusively to transport chartered groups do not have to have this registration.**

My company is based in another state and we plan on touring locations in Michigan. Are there any permits, filings or licenses required?

Michigan is proud to provide open borders to Interstate Motor Carriers of Passengers with no filings required. Carriers must have a valid federal interstate operating authority while performing interstate movement in Michigan.

I plan on getting a bus..... When should I purchase my plates?

After MDOT completes the required safety inspection of the vehicle, you may be issued a reduced fee certificate by the inspector. You must then provide it to the Michigan Secretary of

State at the time you purchase the plate. The reduced fee plate costs \$25.00.

The bus I'm buying is a yellow/black school bus, do I have to repaint it?

Unless the bus is used primarily for the transportation of pupils to or from school and authorized by the Michigan State Police, state law says that except for a bus leased seasonally to transport agricultural workers to and from a field for agricultural operations, a bus **shall not** be painted, in whole or in part National School Bus Yellow and Black. (MCL §257.1833).